

## Skeletons in the Closet

August 22, 2018

Maude Esther Emerson and younger sister Lola Grace Emerson were the daughters of Albert Linden Emerson born August 19, 1857 in Keithsburg, Mercer County, Illinois and Emma Viola Wirt born August 19, 1858 also in Keithsburg, Mercer County, Illinois. Albert and Emma were married December 24, 1879. Albert had four siblings the youngest of which was Ida May Emerson.

On March 6, 1882 Albert's father, William S Emerson secured a loan with Aetna Life Insurance Company for \$1,000.00. The loan was secured by a mortgage of his property, the Principal and interest due May 1, 1888. Apparently he was unable to repay the loan. In 1887 facing the loss of his property, William S Emerson on December 29, 1887 requested in writing an extension of his loan till December 1, 1902. On May 5, 1888 the extension is granted. On July 27, 1888 Albert Linden Emerson runs an ad in local news paper announcing a filing for the appointment of a conservator for his father William S Emerson. On August 6, 1888 a jury Hearing is held to determine if William S Emerson is capable of handling his affairs. That same day Albert Linden was appointed conservator of his father's estate. On November 15, 1888 Albert Linden's appointment as conservator of his father's estate is recorded.

Why William S Emerson borrowed the \$1,000.00 is not officially known however in the same time frame Albert decides to acquire an interest in a steam powered thrasher. It is unclear if he was a partner in the endeavor or purchased the steam powered thrasher on his own. The \$1,000.00 was quite likely a loan to his son Albert for this endeavor. Information from a descendent of Ida May Emerson states the business venture did not go well and may have caused the extension of the loan. Apparently with the stress of the failed business and the loss of his legacy of his father's property Albert began drinking and became extremely belligerent.

January 4, 1890 Emma Viola Wirt was allegedly beaten by Albert Linden Emerson per a March 5, 1891 divorce filing. Emma Viola Wirt would have at that time been eight months pregnant with Lola Grace Emerson who was born one-month later February 03, 1890. On January 1, 1891 Ida May Emerson and Albert Linden enter in an agreement for Ida to be paid \$300.00 for taking care of her parents. Again on February 02, 1891 Emma Viola Wirt is allegedly beaten again by Albert Linden Emerson per the same March 5, 1891 divorce filing. On February 27, 1891 Albert Linden Emerson's mother, Deliah Hurst (Emerson) dies. Ida May Emerson, Albert Linden's sister, moves to Nebraska. March 02, and 03, 1891 Emma Viola Wirt is allegedly beaten again by Albert Linden Emerson per March 5, 1891 divorce filing. Emma states she left the home and went to her mother's farm with her children after the March 03, 1891 beating. On March 05, 1891 Emma Viola Wirt's petition for divorce is denied. January 28, 1892 William Swafford Emerson dies. February 6, 1892 Ida May Emerson and Edward L Emerson file a law suit against their brothers and sisters for a partition of the estate of their father, forcing the sale of the property. About February 10, 1892 Albert Linden Emerson purchases the property at public auction with the Aetna lien against the property. April 20, 1894 Sidney Wirt Emerson the youngest and last sibling of Maude Esther Emerson and Lola Grace Emerson is born. December 1, 1897 Albert L Emerson's loan from his sister Ida May Emerson is due however he is unable to pay. December 21, 1897 Ida May Emerson purchases the mortgage from Aetna. About 1898 Albert Linden's Sister, Ida May forecloses on his farm. 1898 Emma Viola Wirt alleges the beatings start again per March 3, 1903 divorce filing. June 6, 1898 Ida May Emerson purchases the family farm at public auction for \$2,065.37. January 1, 1903

Emma Viola Wirt is beaten again, this time she has to be hospitalized. February 27, 1903 Emma Viola Wirt takes her children and leaves Albert L Emerson. March 03, 1903 Emma Viola Wirt again files for divorce and also requests an injunction against liquidation of real and personal property. Also seeks a

restraining order from Albert bothering her at her mother's farm. She is obviously denied again.

December 22, 1904 Emma Viola Wirt (age 46) leaves Illinois for California presumably with all four of her children: Maude Esther Emerson (age 22), Joseph Linden Emerson (age 18), Lola Grace Emerson (age 14), and Sidney Wirt Emerson (age 10). In June of 1910 Emma Viola Wirt returns to Kiethsburg, Illinois, it is believed her mother, Ester Groves was ill and Emma returned to look after her. In fact Maude Esther Emerson then married to Elmer Evan Hardin also traveled to Kiethsburg, Illinois in 1910.

On July 9, 1910, Albert Linden Emerson files for divorce, a summons is issued for Emma V Wirt to appear in court for divorce proceedings

On July 14, 1910 a Summons is served but given to Hester Stevens, where Emma is staying, it is recorded July 15, 1910.

September 14, 1910 A court hearing is held where Albert L. Emerson seeks a divorce on the grounds of desertion. Emma V. Wirt (Emerson) is not present it is presumed she had returned to California. The same day a Divorce is granted by default to Albert L. Emerson for desertion.

October 11, 1910 Albert L. Emerson marries Elmira E Crone in Muscatine, Iowa

October 02, 1911 Albert Linden writes letter to Joseph indicating Maude & Sidney are there in Calif.